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WHAT WAS ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S CREED?

BY GEORGE M. MC CRIE.

In the *Westminster Review* for September Mr. Theodor Stanton draws to a close the fourth of a brilliant series of articles upon Abraham Lincoln with the following words:

"A word still remains to be said about Lincoln's religious belief,—or, shall I say, non-belief? Messrs. Nicolay and Hay and Mr. Herndon devote considerable space in their Lives to this aspect of their hero. That Lincoln was an orthodox Christian nobody pretends to assert. But his friends and biographers differ as to how much of a Christian he was. If Lincoln had lived and died an obscure Springfield lawyer and politician, he would unquestionably have been classed by his neighbors among Free-thinkers." (*Westminster Review*, p. 264.)

Then follows a sentence which at once recalls the Westminster Abbey ceremonial over the remains of Charles Darwin:

"But, as is customary with the church, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, when Lincoln became one of the great of the world, an attempt was made to claim him. In trying to arrive at a correct comprehension of Lincoln's theology [?] this fact should be borne in mind in sifting the testimony." (*Ibid.* 264-5.)

It may be added that the "attempt" in question is generally more vehement in proportion to the scantiness of the evidence in favor of orthodoxy. And this for obvious reasons. No man thoroughly, or even mainly, "at one" with the popular religious belief of his age, requires *any* orthodox verification, or identification, after his decease. In such cases, not to have condemned current religious beliefs implies acquiescence in their reasonableness and utility. And it is just here, I think, that Mr. Stanton, in face of the very evidence, so carefully and minutely gathered by himself, comes to a wrong conclusion in Lincoln's case. I italicise in the following extract:

"Another very important warping influence which should not be lost sight of was Lincoln's early ambition for political preferment. Now, the shrewd American politician with an elastic conscience joins some church, and is always seen on Sunday in the front pews. But the shrewd politician who has *not* an elastic conscience—and this was Lincoln's case—simply *keeps mum on his religious views*, or, when he must touch on the subject, deals only in platitudes. And this is just what Lincoln did." (*Ibid.* p. 265.)

In support of this Mr. Stanton quotes from Herndon's "True Story of a Great Life," p. 439, as follows: "Inasmuch as he was so often a candidate for public office, Mr. Lincoln said as little about his religious

"opinions as possible, especially if he failed to coincide with the orthodox world." Now, this is evidence of Lincoln's declinature to mix up religious opinions with politics, but it is evidence of nothing more. But how about the following passage, which Mr. Stanton also quotes from Herndon's "True Story," p. 446-7. "In 1854," says Mr. Herndon, "he asked me "to erase the word God from a speech which I had "written and read to him for criticism, because my "language indicated a personal God, whereas he insisted no such person ever existed." This was not "keeping mum on his religious views." It was asserting the position of an *Atheos*. According to the testimony of Justice David Davis, Lincoln "had no "faith in the Christian sense of the term—had faith "in laws, principles, causes and effects." I fear also what Mrs. Abraham Lincoln says of him: "His only "philosophy was that what is to be will be, and no "prayers of ours can reverse the decree." I not only say *Atheos* then, in this case, but *Hyle Atheos*. Seeing that his was not mere indifference, no mere universal Scepticism or Pyrrhonism, but a self-argued-out conviction of the suffering of the Cosmos without an *Anima Mundi*, and of the human organism without an *Anima humana*.

"Lincoln thought little on theological subjects and "read still less," continues Mr. Stanton (*W. R.* 265). Read this in connexion with the testimony of Mr. John T. Stuart, his first law partner, quoted in the following page, and it becomes no longer remarkable. "He "[Lincoln] was an avowed and open infidel, and sometimes bordered on atheism." A distinctly two-fold attitude is here indicated—infidelity towards, or rejection of, current orthodoxy and negation of, at all events, a personal Deity. Now, an honest mind, such as that of Lincoln cannot "border on" Atheism and, at the same time, show Theistic or Deistic leanings. And, this understood, a light is thereby shed on some of his utterances which might otherwise be open to misconstruction. Thus, for example, to say, as Lincoln did, according to Mr. Herndon's record, "All "such questions [moral and social reforms] must first "find lodgment with the most enlightened souls who "stamp them with their approval. *In God's own time* "[I italicise] they will be organised into law, and thus "woven into the fabric of our institutions," ("True

Story," p. 167) simply means that, *in the march of events* such and such would happen. A mere passing phrase like this can no more be construed into a profession of Theistic belief than can the slang invocation vulgarly associated with the act of sneezing. Mr. Stanton sees this and, accordingly, does not reckon with the expression in his summing up, which runs as follows :

"A man about whose theology [?] such things can be said is of course far removed from orthodoxy. It may even be questioned whether he is a theist, whether he is a deist. That he is a free-thinker is evident; that he is an agnostic is probable. Addison's line seems to fit the case: 'Atheist is an old-fashioned word: I am a free-thinker.'" (W. R. p. 266.)

This is merely playing round the fringes of the issue. "Old-fashioned words" have often a definite meaning which newer coinages lack. "Free-thinker" means anything or nothing. Thought—of the *cor cordium*—is ever unbound, though the written or spoken expression of it may be fettered. The term has no dynamic character. As well might one speak of an "Opinionist." "Agnostic," again, simply equals the *minus* sign, and has, moreover, associations of a superfluous and superficial nature wholly foreign to Lincoln's sturdy personality. *Falsetto* negation is fashionable;—as a writer in the *National Reformer* (Sept. 6, 1891) neatly puts it—"Great is the virtue of a large "octavo page, good type, the words 'an agnostic,' and 'the imprint of Williams and Norgate.'" But plain words are best. That he was *Atheos* connotes a definite attitude towards the great religionist chimæra, and, apart from some minor disadvantages of association, really defines Lincoln's position more closely than any of Mr. Stanton's epithets. It is positive not negative, indicates what the man professedly *was*, rather than what he was *not* or what he *opugned*. The immemorial two-fold problem—"What *is* and what do I "know?" demands not a quibble, but a rational, definite reply. Only one synthetic system faces this two-fold issue. All Free-thinking, Agnosticism, Parkerism, etc., but palter with this supreme *creed*. And that is the Scientific Idealism which, based on the concrete, yet focuses the rays of all possible knowledge in the individual self, knower and known in one. The answer is complete only in Hylo-Idealism.

It is not necessary to stretch the point too far by crediting Lincoln with having excogitated a "world-scheme," so profoundly simple yet simply profound, from the perusal of "tomes of metaphysic lore." These in all probability would with him have confused the issue. Though he rationally apprehended it, possibly he might not have been able to give a logical reason for the faith that was in him—but his already-quoted expression points unquestionably to a solipsismal conclusion. "All such questions [moral and social re-

forms] must first find lodgment with the most enlightened souls who stamp them with their approval." This is *true Meliorism, from the brain outwards*, as opposed to the dream of a ready-made New Jerusalem descending from the skies. Not unnaturally, however, his formula invites amendment. For the phrase "*find lodgment with the most enlightened souls should be substituted, spring from the most powerful individual intellect*," The individual Ego—not a group of Egos is the last recess of thought. It is dualism not Auto-Monism which views all Egos as on one plane. The common phrase of Secularism "One world at a time" has an inner meaning which Secularists miss. The world is to every man as it affects him—to each "a different world." That *other* Egos are in my self-created Cosmos can only be a secondary, never a primary, conclusion. With my own Cosmos I alone have to do,—but, inasmuch as it is indissolubly one with me, I apprehend the existence of other Egos. In the words of the late Miss Constance Naden "the Ego in its entirety *is* the universe as felt "and known." Empiricism has to do with the manifold—Scientific Idealism with the simple unit, including all its content and intent. But to continue. Note Lincoln's complete and significant indifference to popular religionism. Mr. Stanton furnishes us with the following instances of this (W. R. p. 265) "The text "of the greatest moral document of his Presidency, "the Emancipation Proclamation, contains, as originally drawn up in secret with his own hand, no "mention of God; and what is still more significant, "when the 'omission' was pointed out to him, by one "of his Cabinet officers, he simply incorporated into "the text the religious paragraph offered him." And again "When a convention of clergymen passed a "resolution requesting the President to recommend to "Congress an amendment to the Constitution, recognizing the existence of God, Lincoln prepared a first "draft of a message to this effect. 'When I assisted "him in reading the proof,"—says Mr. Defrees, Superintendent of Public Printing during Lincoln's administration,—"he struck it out, remarking that he "had not made up his mind as to its propriety.""

I emphasise these specially notable words. "*He "had not made up his mind as to its propriety.*" In plain words an affirmation that the God-idea is fathered by and comes and goes, not only with the individual consciousness, but with individual opinion as to its "propriety" in given circumstances. Could the supremacy of the individual Ego be more explicitly stated? But I need scarcely add that a Deity thus shelved or not shelved, according to the dictates of political expediency, or of individual opinion as to the "propriety" of either course, is no Deity at all. He is as fictional as the "John Doe" or "Richard Roe" of a legal

writ, and anyone making use of such a creation—the puppit not the parent, of his own Egoity—is supposed to know with what he is dealing. Orthodox religionism may well despair of Abraham Lincoln as of George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, or President Jefferson. And this being the case, we are in a position to define his life-creed with all due measure of exactness. The only possible alternatives open to a mind so sincere as his, are two in number. They are competently indicated in the following extract from a recent philosophical treatise by Professor Veitch:

“The natural outcome of the Hegelian conception on what may be called the abstract side is simply that the individual is a ‘reflection,’ the passing reflection of the all-comprehending substance. . . . The absolute is the flow of the individuals of time and space—thought is the thought of conscious individuals—the sum of natural law is the divine. On the other hand, as the individual contains the abstract universality, and gives it meaning and being, the supreme principle or ground of all is simply a projection of the likeness of the individual himself on the mirror of his own consciousness.” (“Knowing and Being,” p. 310.)

Looking at the evidence above stated, there can be no hesitation in applying Abraham Lincoln’s life-persuasion to the latter category.

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALISM, OR WHAT DO WE MEAN BY MATTER?

BY EDMUND NOBLE.

“Informatio sensus semper est ex analogia hominis non ex analogia universi: atque magno prorsus errore assertitur, sensum esse mensuram rerum.”
[Bacon, *Instauratio Magna.*]

Has so-called “materialism” a real, or only a controversial value? This issue has been raised anew by many recent discussions on the relation of science to religion, and it may be well to attempt at least a provisional reply to the question. It is by no means generally appreciated by those who take part in such discussions that the names they use do not in any case correspond with the things indicated by them, but are always simply representations of those things, and representations of them in terms of human knowledge. Even clever dialecticians and profound thinkers sometimes lose sight of the truth that the concepts which their terms stand for always mean and only mean, not the thing indicated in its actuality, as existing independently of them, but only that knowledge about the thing which the mind possesses at any particular stage of mental development. In any scientific view of the meaning of knowledge, we can know nothing of objects in the external world apart from the effects which they produce in us—apart from the particular way in which we, as human organisms, feel and deal with their actions upon us and upon one another. Our idea of a thing, though it may represent that thing with more or less accuracy, is thus simply made up of the effects which the thing produces in us, is no

more than our way of knowing it purely special to us, and not a universal way which would be valid for every kind of organism whatsoever. Our knowledge of things has thus several important limitations. In the first place, we can only directly know such things as are capable of acting on us; secondly, we can know objects only in ways that are imposed by our own organism—that is to say, by the senses through which we directly know their qualities; thirdly, we can possess only such kind and amount of knowledge as, up to any particular time, we may happen to have accumulated. The error which most people commit by neglect of these limitations is the error of taking appearances for the things themselves, and this alone has led to some of the most serious defects of the subjective method. But there is the still graver error that has eaten its way into the fabric of all popular thinking until the wisest heads may well begin to despair of its elimination—the error, that is to say, of regarding our concept of a thing at any given period as representing the total qualities of the thing, the sum of its powers and characters, and of believing, which most of us tacitly do, that we may use our concept, as if we were dealing with the thing in its totality. Why is this an error, and why is it an error of the gravest kind? It is an error because our concept of an object has a content of qualities or characters that varies according to the stage of our mental growth. It is an error of the most serious import for thinking because, by using the concept we have at any particular stage of knowledge as representing the whole of the characters of the thing known, we are led to make assertions regarding that thing which, while seeming true for the few qualities by which we know it, are often totally untrue for the thing itself, and even for the thing as it is represented by the concept at a more advanced stage of our knowledge.

That our concept of a thing undergoes gradual increase in its content—that it begins with only a few qualities and ends with many—may be shown by the history of terms. The most simple and most salient characters of an object—characters of sound, action, color, or shape—are always the first to be known, and it is the most prominent of these which the mind describes in the act of conferring the name. Thus the ant was called “swarmer” because “swarming” was the character by which it attracted attention; serpent was so named from its “creeping” motion; heaven was regarded as a thing “heaven” up; and “sky” came into existence to indicate that which seemed to “cover” the earth. Now all these names, when first used, were alive with the meaning thus given to them; but they remained thus vital only for the early stage of man’s knowledge of the objects named. For as men came to know more of the ant, the serpent, the heaven,

and the sky—as their concepts of these grew richer in content—the descriptive meaning of the term died away, and the name originally alive became a mere symbol signifying not one quality of the thing named, but the whole of its qualities. Thus nobody thinks of the ant as a “swarmer,” of the serpent as a “creeper,” or of the heaven as “heaven” up, for the reason that so much is known concerning these things in addition to “swarming,” “creeping,” etc., as to dwindle such meanings into insignificance and make it unnecessary to preserve them as elements of the name. By a like process, the Russian called the duck *utka* because he saw it plunge its beak into the water; the Pole called it *kaczka* because he noticed that it waddled in walking; and the Bosnian gave it the name of *plovka* because he observed it swimming; yet in their survival, none of these terms suggest to the user of them the character from which they originally sprang—they imply and designate the duck in all its characters. So when we speak of the cuckoo we mean, not a bird making the *ku-ku* sound, but an organism of a particular kind, with particular size, plumage, character, and habits. In the last application of it, then, we mean by a name the total quality of the thing named, and the passage from the primitive value of our term to its final symbolic value takes place *pari passu* with our advancing knowledge of the qualities which it connotes.

The commonest experiences of the individual and the race tell the story of this gradual increase in the richness of the concept. The growth of the child mind illustrates a steadily increasing knowledge of the qualities of things; progress from ignorance to knowledge in the adult is largely an advance of the same kind. “Stone” to the uncultured man is merely a hard substance of a particular size, shape, color, and weight; to the geologist the concept has a rich content of both chemical and physical characters, and demands for its thorough realisation as an idea familiarity with the whole history of the planet. So to the ignorant man, “stars,” originally things “strewn” are little more than

“Specks of tinsel fixed in heaven
To light the midnights of his native town:”

while to the educated, and above all to the scientific mind, the concept “star” is rich with thoughts of cosmic processes and has a content of materials drawn from well-nigh every department of knowledge. Look next at the concept of “matter.” Not very long ago the characters connoted by the term were very meagre. The first known “matter” meant little more than the most simple and more obvious qualities, such as those of color, size, shape, weight, hardness or softness; so that when a man spoke of “matter” he meant nothing but these. Note now how enormously

this primitive idea has been enlarged, even within the last hundred years, by the constant addition to it of new qualities in “matter” that have been brought to light by modern investigation. It is within the memory of men still living that the possibility of “matter” existing in a gaseous and invisible state was unknown, and the effect of such ignorance was to deny to “matter” the power of assuming the gaseous condition. Up to a period still more recent, the luminiferous ether was excluded from the category of “matter” through the mind clinging to its old concept and refusing to believe that “matter” could manifest the characters which the ether was known to possess. Yet the advanced modern physicist no more hesitates to regard the characters displayed by ether as characters of “matter” than he hesitates to accept the material character of the phenomena manifested by gas. In these two particulars alone, therefore, the concept “matter” has been enlarged from its former narrow meaning of “tangible” and “visible” to that wider meaning which claims the term for the whole range of the invisible world—whence it may be said that the universe no more means earth, sun, planets and stars, but the total ether system in addition to these. The same modern research, moreover, which has thus extended the domain of “matter” has also given us a vastly richer knowledge of its qualities in detail. We now know it to possess physical, chemical, and electromagnetic characters that only a few years ago were not even suspected. Yet when the knowledge of these new characters first dawned upon the mind, the hard, rigid framework of the old concept of “matter” refused to yield them admission, and for a time men tried to find a place for the mysterious qualities outside the category of “matter.” Once, for example, light was regarded as due to luminous corpuscles projected at immense speed from heated bodies: now we know it to be wave-disturbances of the same ether so long believed to be non-material. Once heat was a subtle immaterial something that could be poured as it were, from body to body: now we know it to be due to the movements of the parts of the masses heated. Once electricity was deemed to be a mysterious fluid: now we recognise in it a mode of ether motion implicating the parts of tangible bodies. In a word, the numberless qualities which, because they did not seem to harmonise with our earlier and imperfect concept of “matter,” we excluded from our notion of “matter,” have in recent years not only been included in the concept, but have become essential to our modern idea of “matter.” The same is true of our idea of “matter” as it exists in organisms. How hard, inert atoms could display the phenomena of life was for a long while inexplicable, and men, rightly rejecting such a supposition as absurd, were driven to the ex-

pedient of regarding life as non-material—of inventing for its explanation a subtle vital force, present specially in the organism, but to be found nowhere else in all the inorganic world. Yet nothing is now clearer than that, highly special and peculiar as are the characters of life, they are no more and no less than characters of "matter" aggregated under the highly special and peculiar circumstances which condition "matter" in the organism. The like may be said of mind and consciousness. Clinging to our narrower concept of "matter," we have long resisted the notion—not that consciousness can be "matter" or its movements, for that idea is obviously irrational—but that "matter" in particular states of aggregation can manifest the characters we call consciousness and mind. Yet in the growth and increasing richness of our concept of "matter" we are finding out that even characters like consciousness and mind must be brought into our concept—not that they must be narrowed into the petty limits of the early idea of "matter," but that the concept of "matter" must be widened to take them in—not that we must regard consciousness and mind as "matter," or even as the movements of "matter," but that we must view them as ultimately due to the power which "matter" manifests.

Let us now apply these principles to some of the popular discussions which have taken place from time to time on the subject of religion and science. It is still quite common among writers who oppose so-called "materialism" to bring the old narrow concept of "matter" into contrast with some of the new qualities which have been discovered in "matter," and to base upon the contrast an argument which relegates such qualities to a completely non-material sphere. Thus Dubois-Reymond wrote:

"It remains entirely and forever inconceivable that it should signify a jot to a number of carbon and hydrogen, nitrogen and oxygen, and other atoms how they lie and move: In no way can one see how from their concurrence consciousness can arise."

The same idea has been expanded by Prof. G. F. Barker, of Yale College:

"Is there not behind this material substance a higher than molecular power in the thoughts which are immortalised in the poetry of a Milton or a Shakespeare the art creations of a Michael Angelo or a Titian, the harmonies of a Mozart or a Beethoven?"

But perhaps the best known example of this kind of reasoning is from the vigorous pen and cultured mind of Dr. James Martineau, who wrote during the Tyndall controversy:

"By what manipulation of your resources will you educe consciousness? No organism can ever show you more than matter moved. . . . Surely you must observe how this 'matter' of yours alters its style with every change of service; starting as a beggar, with scarce a rag of 'property' to cover its bones, it turns up as a Prince when great undertakings are wanted. Such extremely clever matter—matter that is up to everything, even to writing Hamlet and finding out its own evolution, and substituting a mole-

cular plebiscite for a divine monarchy of the world, may fairly be regarded as a little too modest in its disclaimer of the attributes of mind."

All these positions, representing arguments that constantly recur in the discussions of the hour, are generically alike, and their validity depends wholly on what is meant by the term "matter"—on the number and kind of qualities which it connotes. If in using the word "matter" the arguer has already abstracted from the conception that which he has included under other conceptions, such as those of "mind," and "consciousness," his position will be substantially this: "I have divided phenomena [we may suppose him saying] into three classes. To certain characters presented to me in knowledge I give the name of 'matter'; to certain other characters which appear to me to differ from 'matter' and from one another I give the names 'consciousness' and 'mind.' Therefore, this mental separation effected, I must protest against any attempt to say that the phenomena I call 'mind' and 'consciousness' are identical with and of the same kind as the phenomena which I call 'matter.'" When, in other words, a man deliberately believes and confirms himself in the belief that "matter" can only be hard, and inert, and move, and cannot produce the phenomena which he calls "mind" and "consciousness," and believes this because he has already abstracted from his concept of "matter" and of what "matter" is capable of producing, that which he has determined to call by other names, then all attempt to show that from his "matter," "consciousness," and "mind" must follow is naturally resisted by him. But in dealing thus with "matter" he is dealing all this time not with "matter" as it acts and operates externally to him, independently of him and his knowledge, but with a particular concept of "matter" which is in his mind, with what his mind knows of the external reality at a particular stage of mental development. For his attitude to be correct he must know, not that "mind" and "consciousness" are not identical with "matter"—for that is conceded—but that "matter" cannot under any circumstances manifest the characters which he chooses to describe as characters of "consciousness" and "mind." Otherwise his claim is quite intelligible, and,—admitting the validity of his concept—even reasonable. For if we persist in narrowing our concept of "matter" down to the simplest qualities—if we regard it as made up of hard, inelastic atoms only, capable only of movement, and therefore capable only of the limited powers of producing phenomena which we attribute to movement—then we shall find no room whatever in our concept for the characters of "consciousness" and "mind." But we might with just as good reason deny to our "matter" thus simplified the various physical,

chemical, electro-magnetic, and vital characters which modern research has imported into the concept. We might say, imitating Du Bois-Reymond, that it is inconceivable how from the concurrence and movements of the ultimate parts of "matter" a flash of lightning should result. Could any one, holding to the ancient concept of "matter" explain from it the phenomena of light? By what manipulation of the material resources of 200 years ago would the theorist educe the mysterious stresses in ether out of which electro-magnetic phenomena arise—could any gross, tangible, mechanical process ever show him anything more than "matter" moved? Where is the logician of to-day who, with nothing but the old concept of "matter" to guide him, would undertake to declare why a current of electricity should turn a bar of soft iron into a magnet, or why a solar disturbance should set all the compass needles on the earth vibrating? To the savage, still shut out from the new knowledge of "matter," it must remain for ever inconceivable that he can talk for twenty miles through a telephone wire: in his mental world the transmission of speech over such distances and by such means is not to be explained by any concurrence of atoms, or by movements of them. And he would be a cultured barbarian indeed, who, were you to show him some of the simplest modern experiments in physics and chemistry, would not at once separate the new qualities disclosed to him into a class apart from "matter"—would not, that is to say, regard them as belonging to some non-material sphere, some mysterious realm of "spirit."

Note, moreover, how totally beside the question at issue is the contrast so often set up between "ideas," "thought," "consciousness," "molecular movements," and "material particles." As nobody has ever claimed that the size, color, velocity, or the temperature of a body is "matter," so nobody has asserted that ideas are "matter," that thought is "movement," that "consciousness" and "mind" are the "dance of molecules." Yet size, color, velocity, temperature, are characters manifested by "matter," and so "consciousness" and "thought" are characters displayed by "matter" in the living and highly organised state. Life, again, is not "matter"—it is the total series of structural arrangements, activities, processes, and feelings which "matter" manifests in the organised form. So light, heat, electricity, magnetism—these are not "matter," but special modes in which "matter" is active. In a word, the qualities which we associate with "matter" are not anything that "matter" *is*, but are what "matter" *does*. They are not always the acting of "matter" pictured by us as the separate acting of individual atoms and molecules, but are sometimes, as in the organism, characters in which are expressed the associated and co operating activity

of countless millions of atoms and molecules. It is not that "matter" "alters its style with every change of service," but that it alters its service with every change of condition, and that as its worldly circumstances improve it exerts higher powers and displays finer raiment. Do we expect to find in the simple dust-heap the sensitiveness, the mobility, the complexity, and the stored up energy of a mass of protoplasm? This very change in the powers of "matter" by change of its circumstances is an idea rendered familiar to us by the commonest experience of our individual and racial life. How constantly do we not, by some new collocation of our resources, attain results which at first, in the apparent poverty of those resources, would have seemed quite impossible of achievement. When instrumental music had not yet been born, what human being with his simple ideas about wood and metal, could have conceived that by mere manipulation of such resources men could have educed the complex and ravishing notes heard in our modern concert rooms. Or when a picture was a mere "scratching," as its name implies, into whose imagination could there have entered the thought of modern art and its magic possibilities?

It is true enough—and no genuine scientist will be found to deny it—that between the thing ordinarily conceived of as "matter" and some of the phenomena to which "matter" is capable of giving rise, there is a difference amounting to a total difference of kind. Dr. Paul Carus is indisputably right in saying [Fundamental Problems, 2nd edition, p. 353], "A motion is a change of place; and force is expended wherever a change of place occurs. The thing moved is material, but the motion itself is not material. When we speak of a man's ideas we mean his ideas, not the material particles of his brain. . . . To define matter as an all-comprehensive term which has to include all features of reality is an unjustifiable license." But these positions, as laid down by Dr. Carus, are not really disputed for a moment by the so-called materialist; and the only persons who assert that he denies them—and claim that by "thought" he merely means particles of "matter" or the movements of such particles—are the very controversial theologians who have so wofully misunderstood what they term the materialistic tendencies of modern scientific thought. All the scientist seeks to show is that the thing called "matter," whatever it be in its nature, gives rise not only to movement, but also to subjective phenomena which cannot by any stretch of the imagination be identified with the bare concept of "matter" or even with the concept of "matter" moving. What is asserted by the scientist, is not that "consciousness," "mind," and "life" are "matter," are the movements of "matter," are so much dancing of molecules fore-posed

as dead and inert and therefore as incapable of the very powers in issue, but that "life," "mind," "consciousness" are phenomena potential in all "matter," but displayed by it only in certain states of material aggregation. However much, therefore, from the standpoint of the old concept of "matter" we may sympathise with the sneer at the "gospel of dirt," and "the mud philosophy," we cannot but regard it, from the standpoint of the new concept of "matter" and its capacities, as the self-ridicule of a low and base view of things, soon to be outgrown.

Finally, it rests with ourselves whether our "matter" shall be the mere beggar in rags which it still remains for the barbarian, or whether it shall appear to our enlarged vision in the Princely vestments with which modern knowledge has clothed it—whether its raiment shall reflect the poverty of human thought at its very beginnings, or represent the comparative affluence of the modern mind—whether, in a word, we shall mean by it, not the "molecular plebiscite" of Dr. Martineau, but the divine monarchy in which every man of science implicitly, if not explicitly, believes by the very act of believing in the reality of the universe and its processes. Modern scientific conceptions are clearly in favor of a unitary conception of things—of the view that the power out of which phenomena arise, diverse as are its products, is fundamentally one in kind. And when this conception shall have established itself, the old reproach based so long on an unduly narrow concept of the nature of "matter" will pass away until the world of the much buffeted and long misunderstood "materialist" shall be grander than any yet dreamed of by the theologian.

CURRENT TOPICS.

THE World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union lately in convention at Washington, censured the fashion of wearing birds on bonnets, because it encouraged cruelty and the destruction of useful and innocent fellow beings. Ornamental feathers were also condemned unless plucked from the birds in a painless way. This is delightfully sentimental, and there is a sweet and womanly inconsistency in it that reminds me of a like resolution passed a few months ago by some ladies in Rhode Island, who afterwards had what they called a "lovely time" at a clam-bake, where the clams were all roasted alive. Nothing was said in the platform of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union against the wearing of seal skin cloaks, which really belong to harmless fellow creatures, who have been beaten to death with clubs to furnish the costly raiment. The answer to this charge of inconsistency is very familiar, "We may kill and torture animals for food and clothing, but not for decorations and adornment." Why not? The bill of sale given to Adam in the garden of Eden makes no distinction, but confers upon him "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth on the face of the earth." And, says the psalmist, in answer to his own question, What is man that thou art mindful of him? Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of

the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." And from this charter comes the logical deduction that man may do what he likes with his own. A Sicilian peasant, rebuked by an American for cruelly beating his mule, retorted, "He has not been baptised"; meaning that the mule was not a fellow creature, but a piece of property that might be beaten at his owner's will.

* * *

In the Eastern states there is a useful society called "The Band of Mercy," and the object of it is the prevention of cruelty to animals. Its pledge is this, "I will try to be kind to all harmless living creatures, and will try to protect them from cruel usage." Simple as the pledge appears to be, the society itself was not quite satisfied with its conditional and qualified character, for by a supplementary rule the members are permitted to strike out the word "harmless," if they choose to do so. The chief merit of the society is its valuable influence upon children, teaching them to be merciful to the lower animals. It has an organ published in Boston called *Our Dumb Animals*, in which the beautiful doctrine of kindness is advocated in a very attractive way. It is not always logical, but it is not to blame for that, because the whole doctrine is full of difficulties. For instance, I find in *Our Dumb Animals* a little poem asking mercy for the toad, on grounds which appear to be somewhat out of harmony with the doctrine. The first verse of it is this:

"Don't kill the toads, the ugly toads,
That hop around your door.
Each meal, the little toad doth eat
A hundred bugs or more."

This reduces the whole doctrine at last to a mere question of human interest, and human pleasure. Be merciful to the toad, because he is unmerciful to the bugs; and the bugs are a nuisance to us.

* * *

What, in the classic vernacular of the schoolboys, is called "a dead give away," was the charge of Judge Adams to the Grand Jury impanelled at Chicago for the November term. Said the judge, "In a community like this, where crimes and misdemeanors, and proceedings of courts, and almost all matters of public interest are reported with substantial accuracy in the papers, it seems almost superfluous to instruct a grand jury of intelligent men with regard to their duties." This patronising flattery was no doubt swallowed like a select oyster by the "intelligent men," and relished in the spirit of thanksgiving; but when it comes to impanelling the trial jury, Judge Adams will reverse himself, and decide that knowledge obtained through the public press disqualifies a jurymen, at least knowledge concerning the matter to be tried. Persons who have had occasion to observe the tendency of Illinois courts will not be surprised that the intelligence which qualifies one jurymen disqualifies another. This judicial paradox is not law; it is one of the "fantastic tricks" played in the name of the law; and funny as the antics of a jester in a comic play. Not at all comical, but altogether serious and significant was the instruction against "permitting the process and machinery of the court to be used for the collection of debts." To this he ought to have added, "or for purposes of persecution and blackmail." Even as it is, the instruction reads like a sentence, for it includes an intimation that to such base uses have Grand juries been perverted in Chicago. Critics of our courts, who expose their illegal practices, do so under peril of contempt and ridicule; but if they will only possess their souls in patience, and wait, the time will surely come, when some talkative and affable judge will confess them from his place on the bench itself. Then, and not till then, will the revelations get the "public ear"; and a very long ear it is.

* * *

It is a trait of human weakness that we take pleasure in the tribulations of others, especially if we have suffered the like tribu-

lations ourselves. When I was campaigning in Missouri, a citizen came into camp one evening and complained that the soldiers had stolen all his chickens. He demanded "reparation and apology"; and when he got neither, he sardonically said: "Well, gentlemen, Mr. Brooks, who lives just beyond me in the timber over there, has a much finer lot of chickens than mine; suppose you try them." The hint was taken, and the chickens too. In a spirit equally generous, I laughed at that crowd of Chicago clergymen, mostly Congregationalists I believe, who recently received letters from the "Department" informing them that packages from England awaited them at the Custom House. As it was too early for Christmas presents, and too late for April Fooling they wondered what was in the packages. Perhaps dynamite, for another anarchist plot had been uncovered, and it might be that the revolution was to begin by blowing up all the clergy. When they arrived at the proper bureau, they learned that the packages had been "seized" at the Post Office by the collector of customs, on suspicion that they contained lottery tickets or smuggled goods. On opening the packages the mischievous character of their contents was made known. They were deadly books, Reports of the proceedings had at the International Congregational Council which met in London last June. Only that, and nothing more. They were all released from custody, and given to their owners on payment of the fine levied upon them by the tariff law. A reverend canon of the Episcopal church received a book from England at the same time. It was entitled "Holy Communion," and was, I think, a present from the Bishop of Salisbury, the author of the book. By convincing the inquisition that the bishop had not concealed any lottery tickets between the leaves, the Canon was allowed to take the book on payment of a tribute of twenty-five cents. "A heavy tax," he said, "when you consider that the book is worth but a dollar. Twenty-five cents tax on a dollar's worth of property is a good deal." And yet for twenty years, and more, the reverend Canon has paid without noticing it, twice that percentage of taxation on his clothing, and other things. The payment of a visible and tangible tax of twenty-five cents, is an object lesson in political economy more instructive than the payment indirectly of a thousand dollars. This proves that General Othello was not so mad as he looked when on a memorable occasion he remarked:

"He that is robbed, not seeing what is stolen,
Let him not know it, and he's not robbed at all."

* * *

One gratifying result of the "higher criticism," as they call it now, although it used to go by the name of "infidelity," is that the eternal prospects for little children who die in infancy are very much improved. So also is the chance of the heathen, and the pagan, and "many other persons who have not been called by the ministry of the word." That quotation is taken from some resolutions offered by Dr. Briggs before the Presbytery of New York, during the debate on the revision of the Presbyterian creed. They did not mean it so, of course, and yet some of the delegates talked as if salvation was in the keeping of the Presbyterians, and only to be had on terms prescribed by the Synod and the General Assembly. Dr. Briggs proposed that those terms be made more liberal than formerly, and that the Presbyterians allow more people to go to heaven in the twentieth century than they did in the nineteenth. "Some provision should be made," he said, "for the salvation of those incapable of being called by the ministry of the word, and for the heathen." I hope the Presbyterian church will take the advice of Dr. Briggs, and make provision for the salvation of those persons; but should it fail to do so, I shall console myself with a hope, that the Creator has attended to that matter, and that the necessary provision has been made. The resolution of Dr. Briggs expands the horizon of hope, but it leaves a little comfort still for the dear old lady, who said, "The Universalists

believe that all will be saved; but we hope for better things." Here is the resolution:

"Infants dying in infancy and other persons who are incapable of being called by the ministry of the word are regenerated and saved by Christ through the spirit which worketh when and where and how he please; and also many other persons who have not been called by the ministry of the word."

It seems to me that God knows his own children and can pick them out without the help of the Presbyterian church. As there is no body so diseased that it cannot be refined into its original elements when laid in the bosom of its mother earth, so there is no soul so corrupt that it cannot be purified in the bosom of the Universal Spirit where every soul will go.

M. M. TRUMBULL.

NOTES.

Mr. G. M. McCrie is engaged in editing a book containing posthumous essays by Miss Naden and other articles that have reference to her. In the preface to the forthcoming volume, the editor declares that "the interest and attention which have been aroused by the publication of Miss Naden's Essays, and by the succeeding Memoir, which appeared last year, suggested the compilation of her further literary *Reliques*. In the arrangement of the volume the Editor has endeavored, by introducing several reprinted papers, culled from the *Journal of Science*, etc., to add variety to the list now before the reader. The papers which have already appeared, either in periodical or pamphlet form, are marked with an asterisk in the Contents. The other papers have never been published. The appendices are numerous. They consist of some valuable additions and illustrative notes contributed to the already published papers by Dr. Lewins, and by the Rev. E. Cobham Brewer, LL. D.—the latter gentleman having kindly acceded to his notes being reprinted above his signature. To this department the Editor has also ventured to add a reply written by himself and forwarded to the Editor of the *Contemporary Review*, on the appearance in the number for April, of a sketch of Miss Naden's life, from the pen of Rev. Dr. R. W. Dale of Birmingham."

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